

Navy Bean Soup

One of my favorite childhood meals was Nanny's Epic Navy Bean Ham Bone Soup, i.e., navy bean soup simmered with a leftover ham bone. My mom (known as Nanny) has a special gift for using her food sources wisely. Nothing went to waste, ever.

- 1 pound **dried navy beans**
 - 1 ham bone + *ham scraps*
 - 1 tablespoon **olive oil**
 - 1 large onion, peeled and diced
 - 6 cloves garlic, minced
 - 1 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
 - 2 teaspoons **ground cumin**
 - 1/2-1 teaspoon **crushed red pepper**
 - 10 cups water
 - Pepper
1. The Night Before: Place the dried beans in a large bowl and cover with three inches of water. Soak the dried beans overnight (up to 24 hours) to soften. Drain when ready to use.
 2. Place a large 6-quart pot over medium heat. Add the oil, ham bone, onions, and garlic. Sauté for 3-5 minutes to soften the onions.
 3. Then add in the drained beans, thyme, ground cumin, crushed red pepper, 10 cups of water, and any remaining ham scraps. (Do not salt the soup until the end, because ham bones can be very salty.)
 4. Bring the soup to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 60-90 minutes, covered, until the beans are very soft. Uncover and stir occasionally, then place the lid back on top.
 5. Use a fork to pull any remaining ham off the bone and stir it into the soup. Discard the bone. Add 1-2 cups additional water if the soup is too thick. Taste, then salt and pepper as needed.